

**May 23, 2002**

## **PROPOSED RULE TO REDUCE TOXIC AIR POLLUTANTS FROM SURFACE COATING OF WOOD BUILDING PRODUCTS**

### **FACT SHEET**

#### **TODAY'S ACTION**

- ! The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is issuing a proposed rule to reduce emissions of toxic air pollutants from the processes used to apply surface coatings to wood building products. Toxic air pollutants, also called air toxics, are those pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects.
- ! The surface coating of wood building products is the process of applying a protective, decorative, or functional coating layer to a wood substrate used in the construction (either interior or exterior) of residential, commercial or institutional buildings. Wood substrate is defined in the proposed regulation to contain, at a minimum, 50 percent by weight wood or wood fiber. Coating materials include, but are not limited to, paints, stains, sealers, topcoats, basecoats, primers, inks, and adhesives.
- ! EPA worked with state regulators, industry representatives, individual states, and associated groups and trade associations to develop this proposal.
- ! EPA will take public comment on the proposed rule for 60 days following publication in the Federal Register. The Agency expects to finalize the rule within 1 year after proposal.

#### **BACKGROUND**

- ! Under the Clean Air Act, EPA is required to regulate emissions of 188 listed toxic air pollutants. The Act also requires EPA to identify industrial or "source" categories that emit one or more of these toxic air pollutants. For categories of "major" sources (those that emit 10 tons per year or more of a listed pollutant or 25 tons per year or more of a combination of pollutants), the Clean Air Act requires EPA to develop standards that require the application of stringent air pollution reduction measures known as maximum achievable control technology.
- ! EPA's published list of industry groups to be regulated (known as source categories) includes wood building products surface coating operations.
- ! Surface coating operations at wood building product facilities emit a variety of air toxics. Air toxics are emitted from the surface coating application process, drying/curing operations, mixing and thinning operations, and cleaning operations. The toxic compounds emitted vary by facility

but include primarily xylene, toluene, ethyl benzene, ethylene glycol monobutyl ether and other glycol ethers, methyl ethyl ketone, methyl isobutyl ketone, methanol, styrene, and formaldehyde. The health effects associated with exposure to these air toxics can include cancer, respiratory irritation, and damage to the nervous system.

## **BENEFITS AND COST**

- ! Compliance with the proposed limits through reformulation of coatings would reduce 1997 air toxics emission levels by about 3,500 tpy. This represents a reduction of approximately 61 percent. Specific subcategories may achieve even greater emission reductions.
- ! Additional benefits of this action include a decrease in emissions of other pollutants such as volatile organic compounds, as well as a lowered occupational exposure level for employees.
- ! EPA expects implementation of the final rule to result in nationwide annual costs of \$27.3 million. These costs include the implementation of pollution prevention activities, such as reformulation of coatings and monitoring, recordkeeping, and reporting costs.

## **WHAT THE PROPOSED RULE REQUIRES**

- ! This proposed rule would affect any new, reconstructed, or existing wood building product facility that uses more than 4,170 liters (1,100 gallons) of coatings per year and is a “major” source of air toxics emissions. The affected source is the aggregate of all surface coating operations at a “major” source.
- ! EPA expects today’s action to affect about 205 facilities. Emission limits address five subcategories of coated products:
  - (1) Doors and windows.
  - (2) Flooring.
  - (3) Interior wall paneling and tileboard.
  - (4) Other interior panels.
  - (5) Exterior siding, doorskins, and miscellaneous.
- ! The emission limits proposed today give the industry choices and flexibility in how they reduce air toxics emissions. The compliance options include:
  - (1) Use coatings that have been reformulated to reduce air toxics content.
  - (2) Upgrade or install new capture-and-control systems to reduce air toxics emissions.
  - (3) A combination of (1) and (2) above.
- ! Facilities must also meet certain recordkeeping and reporting requirements, including

semiannual compliance reports.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO COMMENT**

- ! To download the standards from EPA's website on the Internet, go to "Recent Actions" at the following address: <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/ramain.html>.
- ! The notice and background information document are also available through the EPA's Air and Radiation Docket and Information Center (Docket Number A-97-52) by calling (202) 260-7548 or fax (202) 260-4000 (a reasonable fee may be charged for copying).
- ! Written comments on the proposed rule should be submitted (in duplicate) to: Air and Radiation Docket and Information Center (6102), Attention Docket Number A-97-52, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20460. Please also send a separate copy to Mr. Vinson Hellwig, Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, Emission Standards Division, Coatings and Consumer Products Group (C539-03), Research Triangle Park, North Carolina 27711; facsimile number (919) 541-5689; electronic mail address [hellwig.vinson@epa.gov](mailto:hellwig.vinson@epa.gov).
- ! If you are submitting proprietary information, you must clearly distinguish it from other comments and clearly label it confidential. To ensure proprietary information is not released or inadvertently placed in the public docket, send such information directly to Mr. Vinson Hellwig, c/o Document Control Officer (Room C521), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards (C404-02), Research Triangle Park, North Carolina 27711.
- ! For general information about the proposed standards, contact Mr. Vinson Hellwig of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, Coating and Consumer Products Group at (919) 541-2317, or by email at [hellwig.vinson@epa.gov](mailto:hellwig.vinson@epa.gov). Or visit the wood building product (surface coating) website at [http://www.epa.gov/ttn/uatw/coat/flatw/flat\\_pan.html](http://www.epa.gov/ttn/uatw/coat/flatw/flat_pan.html).
- ! The EPA's Office of Air and Radiation's (OAR's) homepage on the Internet contains a wide range of information on the air toxics program and many other air pollution programs and issues. The OAR home page address is: <http://www.epa.gov/oar/>.